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Central Intelligence Bulletin

State Department review

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C South Vietnam: South Vietnamese military officials seem increasingly nervous about the US troop reductions.

Recent US Embassy contacts with the South Vietnamese Army officer corps indicate that many of them privately entertain serious doubts about their army's ability to withstand an intensified enemy offensive. Some officers feel the troop withdrawals bring into question US intentions to stay the course in South Vietnam. They believe that the withdrawals are more related to US domestic pressures and to negotiations strategy than they are to the course of the war.

Such uncertainty about US intentions is not confined to the military. US Embassy contacts among political leaders in and out of government reveal that these doubts are widely held and are leading to increased concern about the implications of Vietnamization and a general hardening of Vietnamese attitudes toward negotiations with the Communists.

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